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SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 1905.

A District Inheritance Tax.

The Register of Wills has proposed and the District bar is now considering a bill imposing a collateral inheritance tax of two and one-half per cent in the District of Columbia. In a letter which the Register has circulated in support of the measure, he states that the chief object "is to procure a revenue for the maintenance of the office of Register of Wills and clerk of the Probate Court, which will enable us outside of this source to give as near as it is desirable an absolutely free administration of estates in the District."

About the only charge for probating wills and other testaments which would remain if the Register's project were carried to fulfillment, would be that for copying papers. Otherwise, all estates might be administered free of cost except for the tax, and estates valued at less than five hundred dollars be administered entirely without cost. This is, assuredly, much to be desired.

But the measure proposed as a means to accomplish this good is not open to such general commendation. The Times believes in an inheritance tax, as, in its judgment, nine citizens out of ten believe in it. But the Times thinks the direct heirs should be included with the collateral heirs. The Times thinks the tax ought to be sufficient at least to defray all the cost of registry and probate. But the Times does not believe that two and one-half per cent will be required for that purpose. It happens that two and one-half per cent is as low a rate as any State has established; but the Register cannot possibly know what the income from such a tax would be in the District. The income would vary widely from year to year, and it is the testimony of well-experienced probate lawyers that the revenue would far exceed all the just expenses of the Register's office.

Every executor of the proposed bill indicates almost a startling indifference. The only restraint it imposes on the Register is contained in such phrases as these, which, it will be seen, impose no restraint upon him at all:

Every executor . . . shall be discharged from liability from the amount of such tax . . . by paying the same to the Register of Wills of the said District.

Every executor . . . shall pay to the Register . . . two and one-half per cent of every hundred dollars . . . for the use of the office of such Register of Wills.

Either of the two Congressional Committees on the Judiciary might be trusted to detect this omission, but they ought not to be asked to do so. Nor should they be asked to provide for the payment of surplus funds to the credit of the District of Columbia in the Treasury of the United States and not one-half to the credit of the District and one-half to the credit of the United States. Nor should the bill leave the status of adopted children in doubt, for, although this is only a detail, it is much too important a detail to be neglected.

With the general scheme of an inheritance tax in the District of Columbia few persons will have any fault to find. Perhaps its substance and form, as far as they go, are practical and safe. But the bill is in the other respects The Times has specified so much in need of recasting that it would probably be the wisest course to draft a new act.

A Trust's Side Issue.

During the year ten bank cashiers in Iowa committed suicide. Forty banks were wrecked. The loss to depositors was about \$12,000,000.

Iowa is one of the most prosperous States of the Union. Its wealth is in farms. The people owning these farms are making money, and at the worst, they are independent and sure of good livings. That the banks should have achieved a record of disaster is a strange circumstance.

The tragedies that swept away tidy fortunes are readily explained. The meat trust was to blame, according to the opinion of observers at close range. Many of the bankers had invested in live stock, or had made advances to growers on the reasonable theory of an augmented price. The trust upset all these calculations. It set the price at a figure lower than before, and so cunningly were its plans laid that competition was impossible. There was none to bid against the trust. The result was bankruptcy for the growers, and for people who had relied upon the prosperity of the growers. All this was a side issue, but an important one. A scheme that drives men to beggary and death cannot be regarded either as beneficent or in accord with the principles of justice.

The beef trust, having lowered the price of cattle, and the wages of its

employees, proceeded to raise the price of meat. For this raise, which has been felt by every person who is so circumstanced as to have to keep an expense account, there was no reason but avarice.

Compliments to the beef trust, and may the Government succeed in driving it out of suicide-promoting.

Charity's Delicate Task.

Organized charity has done much to discourage indiscriminate giving. There may even be a question as to whether it has not done too much in this direction. When a mendicant, perhaps worthy and suffering, makes direct appeal, one has to smother a natural and humane impulse to refuse alms. This is cultivating a hardening of the heart, and, whatever its effect on the beggar, its effect upon the person solicited is worth considering.

During the holidays just drawing to a close, organized charity has been kind, almost lavish. There has been an effort to reach all in need and afford substantial relief. An inevitable result has been that many lazy individuals, fully capable of caring for themselves, have relied upon help of which they were in no manner deserving. To suggest the remedy is difficult, for it were better to feed the slothful than permit the unfortunate to go hungry.

The servant question is an ever pressing one in Washington. Reliance has to be placed upon colored women and girls. There is trouble in getting good ones, and in keeping them. Just as there was especial demand for domestic help, many a household had the experience of suddenly finding itself without any. The servants had gone away to humble homes, where they could enjoy the donations of the charitable.

There is a proportion of people capable of working who will not touch work while there is chance of evading it. They are shiftless and lazy. They are willing to open their mouths so as to have food thrust in, but this is the limit of voluntary effort on their part.

The task of charity becomes delicate through the necessity of sifting out this trash and telling it to accept proffered work, or the alternative of empty stomachs.

Dancing in Kansas.

Dr. G. Stanley Hall, of Clark University, in addressing a gathering of six hundred Kansas school teachers advocated the practice of dancing. He might have invaded that prohibition State as an advocate of the open saloon and not created more surprise. As a rule, Kansas does not dance. The foot that follows the plow lends itself imperfectly to the waxed floor. Besides, Kansas holds the opinion that dancing is wicked, and among the ambitions of that Commonwealth is one to be good.

The ultra-Puritanical person who looks upon the ballroom as a blazing den of iniquity, and sees ruin in the association of men and women there, is apt to be an individual of rather nasty mind, and to avoid such wisdom and pleasure. However, there are many who have accepted this belief without knowing any more of the subject than they do of the world to come. They are prejudiced through influences, and not by any inherent qualities of their own. Dr. Hall was trying to enlighten them.

Dancing does not need either defense or advocacy. The youth who two-steps down the road to destruction cannot blame the method, for this is but an incident. There is certainty that the road would have been found just the same, and have been traversed at some gait. Dancing is blamed for much to which it bears no relation. Pursued moderately, it is a healthful exercise. It involves contact under circumstances that encourage good manners. It cannot make a gentleman out of a boor.

In treating the subject, Dr. Hall said: "The basis of art is rhythm, and the basis of rhythm is God." Somehow, this has an impressive sound. It was quite irrelevant. Even a professor, not of dancing but of a branch of higher education, should not have dragged it in. It did not strengthen his case. It is well for one who desires to dance, to dance, but to make the operation a religious ceremony, based upon an implied reverence, is fol-de-rol. People dance because they like it, and not that it is remotely connected with any form of worship.

Mr. Yetter's Dollar.

Mr. Yetter, of Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, has not entered himself in any mean man competition. Were he to do so, all others might as well be withdrawn. He owns a little railroad, does Yetter, and according to common report gets out of it about all there is in it. On a recent occasion he hired a woman to wash the windows of a passenger train for \$1. The woman washed the outside of the glass, and while inside the cars to finish the contract was carried away to the other terminus. During the journey she completed the work. Then she asked for her pay. Mr. Yetter took a different view.

The fare for the trip she had taken involuntarily amounted to \$1. The genial Yetter set up the contention that as she had had a dollar's worth of transportation there existed no

obligation either way. The ride had paid her in full. The woman listened to this reasoning with scant patience, but Yetter was as adamant. He knew his principles, and his affectionate hold upon the dollar was not to be loosed.

Perhaps, the woman would have done well to have taken her scrubbing cloth, and deftly touched up the Yetter countenance, but she chose to take the matter to court. She sued Yetter, and it is to be hoped she may wrestle from him his beloved piece of money. The sum involved is not great, but the motive appeals not only to all members of the Scrub-ladies' Union, but the unbiased observer. Yetter needs severe treatment, and the hope exists that the parting from his dollar may either cure or kill him.

Points in Paragraphs.

A plea of insanity on the part of Mrs. Chadwick would be a confession of guilt, coupled with a merry ha ha.

The actress who offers bail for Nan Patterson can't press against this office.

Judge Parker has lost his first law case, but he is known as a good loser.

Colorado election methods are to be laid bare. One justifiable instance of indecent exposure.

Of course, the discontented employee in Panama can always get even with the Government by throwing up his job.

Diplomats are discussing what will happen if Togo destroys the colliers attending the Baltic fleet. What will happen if he fails to do this, will be that he will lose popularity in Japan.

A crooked banker in Nebraska has landed safely in jail. They have a habit of hanging such people out that way.

It is because fools rush in where angels fear to tread that the authorities are breaking dangerous ice upon which people insist upon skating.

A photograph just published of Mr. Rockefeller is labeled as the first taken of him in twenty years. Wonder arises at the recklessness of breaking a habit so firmly grounded in discretion.

Lawson's bullet-proof armor doesn't show a dent yet.

If Lyman Abbott has to read all the comment, he must regret having expressed a belief.

There ought to be enough ingenuity among a lot of prelates to keep a church scandal down to sewing circle proportions.

The Tippler's New Year's Night.

(Written for The Times by Otis B. Kent.)

I've just come in to say good-by;
I've won a hard-fought fight;
So fill a farewell bumper high;
I drink my last tonight.

We've had good times, boys, you and I,
And you have been good friends;
But now, the drunken gods must die;
Tonight my folly ends.

So here's to those who exult in joys
We've shared in days of yore,
And with this last libation, boys,
I quit forevermore.

May all the sorrows you may know
As down life's way you pass,
Roll from your hearts as smoothly now
"The crystals from this glass."

And now, good-night, I'm going home—
What! ho! another cheer?
Well, if you wish, we'll kiss the foam,
And toast the mothers dear.

Here's to our mothers, may their years
Be all replete with joys;
And may their heartaches, fears, and tears
Be solved by their boys.

I must be gone. What! Just one more?
Well, if you'll have it so:
A toast to sweethearts we adore,
And then I'll surely go.

Here's to our sweethearts, Love's delight,
Now let a toast be quaffed
To eyes as bright, and hearts as light
As this sweet nectared draught.

There boys, the midnight signals
Sound!
Who'd think it was she late?
Hey, Barkeep, make up one more round,
An' give it to us straight!

Who shall zhe, walls ish whirling
'round?
You drunken fools, you lie!
Forgive me, boysh, stand close, we're bound

To drink the damn place dry.
Here's to zhe friends that drag us down
Into zhe depths of hell;
To whom we give our shouls to drown
In lush's unfathomed well.

Here's to the hourse we have lost
Before zhe Bacchic shrine;
Here's to zhe fortunes we have tossed
Into zhe floods of wine.

An' here's to Death, an' here's to Life,
Co-equal in their might;
For Life lightens zhe fires of strife,
An' Death snuffs out zhe light.

An' here's to Fame, an' here's to Hope
Zhat lure poor fools along,
To seek in darkness as zhey grope,
Zhe shinger of zhe shong.

Hoovey, hoovey, zhe gates of Gold
Are open wide; Zhe way
Ish sweet with blooms and fragrant
mold;
Behold zhe waking day!

He rises from his couch of Night,
An' bathes in limpid dew,
Zhen, yawning, clasps with shunbeams
bright,

Hish robe of dazzling blue,
He mounts his chariot of dawn,
And hurtles up through space,
Night's tenebrous despair is gone,
And glory holds ish place.

Resplendent flowers fill zhe plains;
Zhe sky is bright above,
Zhe wild-birds shing transcendent
strains,

O' joy an' hope an' love,
Zhe purpling riv'—shay boysh, ish
quaver,

But I am played out quite:
I guess I'll go to sleep right here,
Good-night,

Good-night, Good-night.

ROOT'S PORTRAIT
CROWDS THE WALLNo Room for Paintings of
Successors

COLLECTION IS COMPLETE

The Effigy of Every Secretary of War
Hangs in the Anterooms.

When the portrait of former Secretary of War Elihu Root, now nearly completed, is added to the collection in the War Department every available space in the two anterooms reserved for this collection will have been used up.

The question is now presenting itself to the who have charge of the collection "What is to be done with the future portraits?"

A Bad Arrangement.

Originally all portraits of the Secretaries of War were strung out along the staircase leading from the first floor of the War Department to the hallway outside of the office now occupied by Secretary Taft. This was found to be a bad arrangement because of the dampness of the hall which made the paint on the pictures moist and threatened to destroy their outlines.

A few years ago it was decided to collect all the portraits and have them in the two anterooms leading into the Secretary of War's private office. This was done, with the result that forty-eight large oil paintings now adorn the walls of the two rooms. They hang so close together as to almost overlap.

Crowded Condition.

The overflow into anteroom No. 1 has also resulted in a crowded condition. With one more large picture added the condition will indeed become serious so far as providing for future Secretaries is concerned.

Should the picture of Secretary Taft be added to the collection soon it is doubtful if a place could be found in which to hang it.

Despite the emergency, there seems no immediate way of meeting it. Some one has suggested that the placing of the portraits in a picture gallery would be the best way out of it, but as yet no one has offered either to build a special gallery for the War Department portraits or to give them space.

Besides, these pictures are the special property of the War Department and would have little interest were they removed from their surroundings. A special fund is set aside in the contingency fund for the painting of the portraits.

As soon as a Secretary of War retires from office he is asked to sit for his picture. The usual sum for painting them is about \$1,000. Thus far the collection is complete.

Historical Portraits.

There are many interesting features about the pictures from an historical standpoint. The collection in reality begins with the picture of Gen. Horatio Gates, who held the title of President of the Board of War in 1777.

Alongside of him is a large portrait of Maj. Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, under which is the insignificant inscription, "Elected by Congress." It is interesting that he was the first Cabinet officer of the United States dignified with the title "Secretary of War." He held office from 1781 to 1785.

Along with these older portraits in the front anteroom are those of Stephen B. Elkins and Russell A. Alger of more recent times.

The grouping of the pictures is not with any special regard to sequence.

Jeff Davis Hidden.

The portrait of Jefferson Davis, one time Secretary of War, does not occupy a prominent place. It is in a corner, but has plenty of company.

Directly over it hangs the Byronic portrait of James Harbord, of New York, Secretary of War, 1824-25. Of staid and sober visage, but wearing perhaps the most brightly decorated uniform in the room, is the picture of Gen. Henry Dearborn, Secretary of War under Thomas Jefferson.

One Year in Office.

James Monroe, small featured and sharp looking, held a place of prominence just alongside of Secretary Dearborn. He held office for one brief year, 1814-1815.

Below him is the stern, scowling face of William L. Marcy, the Secretary of War under President Polk.

Gen. John Armstrong, who held office during the year of 1812, is shown in a bright scarlet uniform of Colonial days, and many others sent flowers and other tokens of friendship.

GENERAL GRANT ACQUITS
YOUNG OFFICER OF CHARGE

General Grant, commanding the Department of the East, has acted on the report of Lieut. Henry C. Evans, Jr., of the artillery corps, tried by court-martial at Fort Jay, N. Y., on a charge of neglect of duty. It was specified that while Lieutenant Evans was at Jonesboro, Ark., he failed to make prompt answer to two official communications addressed to him by his superior officers.

The court found the major part of the specifications, but attached no criminality thereto and, therefore, acquitted the officer of the charge.

LAST OF CODMAN LINE
LEAVES GREAT FORTUNE

BOSTON, Dec. 31.—The will of E. W. Codman, of 53 Marlborough Street, the last of a line of Codmans, has been filed at Salem, and by its terms the family fortune goes to Harvard University and to the Massachusetts General Hospital.

The exact amount of the fortune is unknown, even to the executors of the will, but is thought to be between \$1,000,000 and \$1,500,000. The fortune is divided in equal shares between the institutions.

NOTHING DOING IN HIS LINE.

The Portrait Painter—I'm glad to hear you admire my work, Mr. Porkham. Have you ever been done in oil?

Washington Sunday Times
for 1905

The Washington Sunday Times takes this appropriate occasion of the first day of the New Year to put before its friends and readers its plans for 1905.

The best test, and the only final test, of the success of a newspaper is its circulation statistics. The remarkable growth of The Sunday Times in the year 1904 gives sufficient evidence that it has won the public's approval. The plan for 1905, therefore, will be to strengthen that approval by the betterment of the existing features and the addition of new features of the same good character and attractiveness.

The Sunday Times for 1905, then, will be notable for many things. In its illustrations, attractiveness and artistic grace are combined. Generous in number, they give pleasure to the eye and carry to the mind that quick information that would be hopeless in descriptive text.

The special articles printed in its Magazine Section are chosen especially with an eye to their timeliness, and so treated as to be entertaining as well as instructive. The follies of sensational recklessness and stupid dullness are alike avoided. In quality of style they would meet the demands of a standard magazine; in timeliness they meet the more rigorous demands of a wide-awake newspaper.

The Sunday Times maintains its own staff of writers, but does not hold itself limited to their product. The work of other minds is bought freely. Nowhere is the rule of the survival of the fittest more exactly enforced.

The Sunday Times means to be welcomed by all the members of the family. With this purpose particular attention is given to the interests of the women. Illustrated articles on the fashions of the moment, on physical culture, and on home topics are a prominent and regular feature. The work of Mrs. Augusta Prescott, Marian Martineau, Marion Harland, and Mrs. Margaret Sangster appears in The Sunday Times each week. These writers are chosen as much for their ability to speak with authority on their subjects as for their power to interest the reader.

The pleasure of the younger members of the family is cared for by a special page given wholly to them. Here are interesting little stories, pictures to paint, puzzles to ponder over, and many odd things to amuse, and, like the rest of The Sunday Times, they are free from objectionable language or thought.

Nor should the colored comic section be overlooked. There the favorite funny people disport themselves in adventures and mishaps that are calculated to bring a laugh to the reader whether he be willing or unwilling.

The growth of The Washington Sunday Times in 1904 has been notable. Indications promise that in 1905 it will be phenomenal.

NAVAL CONSTRUCTOR
J. F. SECOR IS DEAD

Built Yards, Dock, and Warships for United States During the Civil War.

After a long and eventful business and social career, which had brought him into close relations with Daniel Webster, Admiral Farragut and hundreds of other men who a half century ago were prominent in shaping the destinies of the nation, James F. Secor, builder of the Mare Island navy yard in San Francisco, the Pensacola navy yard, and many of the monitors, ironclads and dry docks which contributed so largely toward putting an end to the civil war, died suddenly in his handsome country home in Pelham Manor, near New York, last week.

He was ninety years old and until within a few hours of his death he retained the mental clearness and physical vigor which had been the marvel of hundreds of friends for many years.

Only a few weeks ago Mr. Secor celebrated the nineteenth anniversary of his birth. Hundreds called at the mansion to congratulate him upon having joined the ranks of the nonagenarians, and many others sent flowers and other tokens of friendship.

Loved Old Manor House.

One of the strong traits of Mr. Secor was affection for the old Colonial manor house in which he died. It came into the possession of the Secor family several generations ago, and then passed from it. After Mr. Secor had won wealth as a builder of navy yards, dry docks and warships he decided to dedicate part of his fortune to regaining possession of Lord Pelham's manor.

About twenty years ago the opportunity presented itself and Mr. Secor seized it. He converted the estate into one of the handsomest country places in Westchester county and went there to live. Having more land than he needed, he decided to develop it, and it is upon land he sold that a large part of the town of Pelham Manor now stands.

Mr. Secor was born in New York city.

His father was a famous shipbuilder in the early part of the last century. Mr. Secor succeeded to this business and enlarged it to such an extent that before the civil war began his name had become known widely. When the Federal Government wanted many yards and dry docks on the Atlantic and the Pacific Coasts Mr. Secor built them, and when monitors and other armored craft were needed to assist in putting down the secession movement Mr. Secor received many of the construction contracts.

It was when engaged in this work that he became known so well to Admiral Farragut and other men prominent in the struggle to preserve the Union. Being an ardent supporter of the Union movement and an uncompromising Republican, Mr. Secor was in hearty accord with the purposes of these men, and did everything possible to forward them. His home became a social and political center, and Mr. Secor never aspired to or held office.

Interested in Railways.

Several years after the close of the civil war he retired from active business life, although he retained large holdings in several of the big railroads in the country. He devoted himself to the development of his handsome estate in Westchester, and it was one of the sights in Pelham Manor in recent years to see Mr. Secor, who was nearing the century mark, out in the grounds and gardens, engaged actively in supervising the work.

His accurate reminiscence of events in the last seventy years, his knowledge of the motives underlying many important historical movements, and his facility in the recital of stories bearing on the political and social life of men of national and international prominence with whom he had been intimate and whom he had outlived, made Mr. Secor the delight of hundreds of friends.

MEMBER OF A FAMOUS
FIRM DEAD IN NEW YORK

NEW ROCHELLE, N. Y., Dec. 31.—Frank H. Cooper, formerly a member of the firm of Siegel, Cooper & Co., died today at the residence of his son, here. Mr. Cooper was born in Holland in 1843, and came to the United States thirty-five years ago. He was considered one of the ablest business men in the country, and was one of the founders of the giant department store of Siegel, Cooper & Co.

FOND OF IT.

"Jiggs" says he's fond of conversation. "I should say he is! He lives in the same house with his wife, his mother-in-law, a parrot, and a phonograph."

RIOTERS WRECK HOUSES
AND SACK TABERNACLE

PARIS, Dec. 31.—Serious disturbances are reported from Florence, Italy. Recently, a band of socialists, accompanied by thieves, organized a demonstration, which developed into acts of vandalism. They invaded the churches, sacked the tabernacles, and carried off the sacred images.

In the streets they threw stones at the houses where there were illuminations. The leaders of the gang have been arrested.

THE INGRATITUDE OF REPUBLICS.
The American hen lays enough eggs in one month to pay the interest on the national debt in that time. And yet an old eagle has seen more than a century of service and was never known to lay an egg is retained as our national bird. It is simply unjust.—Denver Post.

FORTUNE PILFERED
FROM POSTOFFICES

Burglars Made 688 Attempts During Year.

SOME OF THE BIG HAULS

Government Has Paid Out in Reimbursements the Sum of \$123,322.88.
Other Claims Disallowed.

During the fiscal year which ended June 30, 1904, the United States Government lost \$123,322.88 through the clever work of burglars.

Perhaps double this amount was secured by the cracksmen, but in many cases the Postmaster General refused to reimburse the postmasters for their losses because of their own negligence. The amount above mentioned was actually paid to postmasters who sent in their claims for reimbursement on account of burglary.

Daylight Robberies.

Three cases of daylight robbery were reported during the year that were particularly bold attempts. Robbers entered the postoffices, held up everybody in them, rifled the safes and drawers of their contents and escaped. No large amounts were secured in any of the three instances.

The exact number of burglaries reported to the Postmaster General for the year was 688. That is to say, 688 postoffices were entered in the night time and looted of their contents.

Sometimes the burglaries were committed by expert cracksmen, who used their professional instruments silently, but effectively, in gaining entrance to the building, and then went to work to crack the safes or open the cash drawers. If they had time and felt secure they filed and sawed their way to the treasures which they were seeking, but if time was short and detection possible, the deadly dynamite stick would be brought to bear and the safe blown to pieces.

Needed the Money.

Quite frequently, however, the burglaries were perpetrated by inexperienced men, who performed the deed upon the impulse of great temptation and through force of distressing circumstances.

Many of the burglars were afterward captured, and are now serving terms in various Government penitentiaries for burglarizing Uncle Sam's postoffices, one of the most serious offenses in Federal criminal law.

Rich hauls and poor hauls were made. In many instances hundreds of dollars of postal funds, money order funds or stamps were secured. Then again the burglar would be rewarded by only a few paltry stamps, for which he ran the risk of a long sentence in the penitentiary.

The Biggest Strike.

By far the richest haul made during the year was pulled off by the burglar, or burglars, who entered the Superior, Wis., postoffice a few months ago, and completely rifled the office of all its funds. This postoffice was entered twice. The first visit was, apparently, a mere feeler. This time the burglars secured \$22.3 in postal funds, and \$22.07 worth of stamps, or a haul of \$44.37. A short while later the office was again entered, and this time the silent thieves of the night made a great haul. Stamps to the value of \$13,589, and \$28.89 of postal funds were secured, or a total haul of \$13,597.80.

Postmaster K. Thomas entered a claim each time for reimbursement, and was allowed the full amount of his claims.

Another Rich Haul.